**BROCWAY HIGH SCHOOL**

**February 1, 2014**

To: Principal Dickens, Brocway High School

CC: Dr. Bentley, Mr. Jetson, and Ms. Naranja

From: Ryan M. Spires, Department of Social Studies

RE: New History Curriculum Proposal (Fall 2015)

Students are very familiar with their own textbooks. In order to enhance perspective in an increasingly interconnected and globalized society, students should study excerpts from textbooks around the world. This additional material can be conveyed in a session titled “Global Pages.” Global Pages is a complimentary device that can be integrated into many different lessons during the school year. In its most basic form, students can be given handouts of the excerpts of the textbooks. Students could then work in groups to compare and contrast the narrative in these excerpts with their textbooks, notes, or previous knowledge. Students can examine the way that Japan leaves out information concerning military adventures in China and the Chinese responses to those textbooks. Students could also examine Iranian embellishment and denial of the Holocaust. There are many ways that educators can choose to integrate this information and translated material is readily available on the Internet.

Global Pages can enhance the concept of “different histories” and material bias within the classroom. It can spur a dialogue about the nature of information and whether or not “the victors” write history. Students are asked to use critical thinking and to break away from “matter of fact” material, which will encourage divergent thought and intellectualizing of the world. Students will be utilizing “Strategic Thinking” portion of Webb’s Depth of Knowledge to differentiate and draw conclusions based on the evidence given to them and their prior knowledge.

This compliments Brocway High School’s strategic growth plan, which “encourages students to use critical thinking and open minds to examine the world.” This also incorporates standards, such as ELACC9-10RL6, which requires students to analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience from a work outside of the United States. As an ongoing assignment, Global Pages can be integrated into the curriculum periodically throughout the semester. While it is a simple idea, it has repercussions. Trying to engage into a dialogue about “different histories” can cause students to become belligerent or overly skeptical. While the hope is that they don’t infinitely regress or are turned off by “no perfect answers,” it is certainly possible. Educators must carefully prepare and present their designed activity to students. There are no monetary costs to the school. If implemented correctly, this can be integrated into the existing curriculum without sacrificing valuable hours of previous programming.